

11B: Mustangs, Cougars Again Meet In Playoffs

Tri-Valley, MCM Met In First Round Three Times In Last Five Seasons

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

Even though the Tri-Valley Mustangs and McCook Central-Montrose Fighting Cougars have never faced off in a playoff game, they are quite familiar.

The two Region 2 foes — who have met in the opening round of the playoffs three times in the last five years — will get reacquainted on the Dakota Dome turf tonight (Thursday) in the Class 11B championship game.

All three of those games have gone Tri-Valley's way, a trend Fighting Cougars coach Ryan Evans is hoping to change tonight.

"We've had two heart-breaking losses," he said of the meetings in 2009 and 2010. "We don't play each other in the regular season, but we know about each other."

Tri-Valley brings its traditional running game, but with a few twists. Despite having 3,316 yards rushing on the season, the Mustangs do not have a back within easy striking distance of 1,000 yards on the season.

Cooper Hausmann leads them with 809 yards (10 TD), with Logan Koopman (726 yards, 6 TD), Kyle Erickson (530 yards, 10 TD) and Andrew Buchmann (447 yards, 6 TD) also in the mix. QB Brett Page also has six of the team's 48 rushing touchdowns.

"We have very good balance," said TV head coach Brad McDonald. "We have two good fullbacks. Sam Mader (259 yards, 4 TD) started against Dell Rapids and was our leading rusher that game. We have good depth with our wingbacks."

Aiding the running game is a strong, quick line. The starting front five of the Mustangs averages 230 pounds, with no one

under 210 pounds.

"Including our big guys in the line, they are all pretty fast," McDonald said. "We do not play as much as we can. It has been a benefit in playing the teams we have."

MCM has a similar balance on defense, with linebacker Dominic Blindert's 99 tackles leading the team. Safety Andy Kappenman (84 tackles) leads the team with 11 tackles for loss. Nick Heumiller (37 tackles), who doesn't even start on the Fighting Cougars' talented front line, leads the team with nine sacks. Strong safety Gavin Gassman (31 tackles, 4 TFL) leads the team in takeaways, boasting four interceptions and two fumble recoveries. Jordan Wolf (48 tackles, 2 sacks, 5 TFL) has two fumble recoveries and both of the team's blocked kicks.

"We play a defense that bottles everyone up," Evans said. "We preach having 11 hats to the ball. It is a team effort on the defensive end for us."

Like the Mustangs, MCM has rushed for over 3,000 yards on the season, but Kappenman (1,477 yards, 20 TD) has carried the bulk of the load. Blindert (818 yards, 8 TD) and QB Gassman (506 yards, 5 TD; 412 yards, 7 TD passing) have also averaged better than 10 carries a game.

"They are a very strong, physical football team, both in their line and their backs," McDonald noted. "We're a pretty good-sized team, and they are bigger than we are."

Gassman has also progressed as a passer, with Wolf (10-120, 3 TD) and Kappenman (10-109, 2 TD) being the primary targets.

"He struggled the first couple

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TRI-VALLEY VS. MCCOOK CENTRAL-MONTROSE

SCHEDULES

TRI-VALLEY Mustangs

Date	Opponent	TV	Opp
Aug. 26	at Canton	43	7
Sept. 2	Garretson	48	6
Sept. 9	at Elk Point-Jefferson	45	0
Sept. 16	Flandreau	29	13
Sept. 23	at Dell Rapids	21	14
Oct. 7	Tea Area	36	7
Oct. 14	at Dakota Valley	34	14
Oct. 20	Beresford	51	12
Oct. 25	Garretson	34	14
Oct. 31	Mobridge-Pollock	47	0
Nov. 5	St. Thomas More	48	19

MCCOOK CENTRAL-MONTROSE Fighting Cougars

Date	Opponent	MCM	Opp
Aug. 26	Platte-Geddes-Dakota Chr.	30	7
Sept. 2	Flandreau	7	10
Sept. 9	at Chamberlain	42	6
Sept. 16	at Parkston	14	0
Sept. 23	at S.F. Christian	41	6
Sept. 30	Wagner	27	0
Oct. 7	at Garretson	21	0
Oct. 14	Sioux Valley	40	6
Oct. 25	Flandreau	28	7
Oct. 31	at Grotton Area	29	6
Nov. 5	at Winner	28	7

PROBABLE STARTERS

MUSTANGS OFFENSE				
Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt
QB	7	Brett Page	5-11	153
FB	2	Cooper Hausmann	5-11	175
TB	32	Kyle Erickson	6-0	187
TE	21	Andrew Buchmann	5-9	146
WB	15	Kenton Welbig	6-3	185
TE	33	Dominic Burggraff	6-3	210
T	65	Tanner Adkins	5-8	210
G	57	Logan Koopman	6-0	215
C	72	Jon Burns	6-0	267
G	50	Nathan Bowdine	6-2	240
G	70	Thad Johnson	6-2	210

MUSTANGS DEFENSE				
Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt
S	3	Brett Page	5-11	153
S	2	Cooper Hausmann	5-11	175
C	32	Kyle Erickson	6-0	187
LB	21	Andrew Buchmann	5-9	146
LB	38	Caleb Heiberger	5-10	165
LB	15	Kenton Welbig	6-3	185
DT	72	Jon Burns	6-0	267
DE	33	Justin Seigel	6-3	240
DE	61	Dominic Burggraff	6-3	210
DE	70	Thad Johnson	6-2	210

FIGHTING COUGARS OFFENSE				
Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt
QB	67	Cody Eichmann	6-1	270
G	62	Bradley Heumiller	5-9	225
C	51	Nick Heumiller	6-1	190
G	52	Shayne Gottlob	6-4	215
T	77	Chris Matheiu	6-5	325
TE	14	Jordan Wolf	6-4	250
RB	44	Sam O'Hara	5-9	155
RB	36	Adam Wendrich	5-9	160
RB	21	Dominic Blindert	5-10	180
RB	5	Andy Kappenman	5-10	190
QB	12	Gavin Gassman	6-2	210

FIGHTING COUGARS DEFENSE				
Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt
DT	48	Shaun Donelan	5-10	185
DT	14	Jordan Wolf	6-4	250
NC	77	Chris Matheiu	6-5	325
LB	52	Shayne Gottlob	6-4	215
FS	8	Billy Kappenman	6-2	175
CB	26	Zach Bies	5-9	165
CB	36	Adam Wendrich	5-10	170
LB	24	Greg Mehlerich	5-11	170
LB	21	Dominic Blindert	5-11	180
SS	5	Andy Kappenman	5-10	190
SS	12	Gavin Gassman	6-2	210

11B GAME DAY



RYAN WOODARD/THE BROOKINGS REGISTER
McCook Central-Montrose quarterback Gavin Gassman (12) fights for yardage during the Fighting Cougars' first-round game against Flandreau on Oct. 25. MCM advanced to its first state finals berth, facing perennial Tri-Valley in the DakotaDome today (Thursday) at 7:30 p.m.

PREVIOUS ROUNDS

First Round: Grotton Area 23, Deuel 8; Mobridge-Pollock 20, Britton-Hecla 15; Tri-Valley 34, Garretson 14; McCook Cent.-Montrose 28, Flandreau 7; Winner 28, Wagner 13; Canton 38, Platte-Geddes-Dakota Chr. 14; St. Thomas More 57, Lead-Deadwood 7; Custer 44, Bennett County 8.

Quarterfinals: Tri-Valley 47, Mobridge-Pollock 0; St. Thomas More 42, Custer 0; Winner 49, Canton 17; McCook Cent.-Montrose 29, Grotton Area 6.

Semifinals: Tri-Valley 48, St. Thomas More 19; McCook Cent.-Mont. 28, Winner 7.

FINALS HISTORY

TRI-VALLEY: Won 11B titles in 2007-08, lost in 2009. **MCCOOK CENTRAL-MONTROSE:** First appearance as a co-op. Montrose won 9A titles in 1983-84, lost 1985, 2005 9B finals.

OFFICIALS

Referee — Paul Schreiner, Pierre; **Line Judge** — Kelly Stout, Pierre; **Line Judge** — Mark Gageby, Pierre; **Back Judge** — Tate Gabriel, Pierre

MATCHUPS

TV OFFENSE VS. MCM DEFENSE
Over 1,000 yards have a powerful offense, with several running backs — none over 3,000 yards on the season — contributing to an attack that has pounded out over 3,300 yards. Tri-Valley QB Brett Page has only thrown for 571 yards, but has completed 62 percent of his passes.

MCM OFFENSE VS. TV DEFENSE
Andy Kappenman has been one of the state's top backs, averaging 9.4 yards per carry and 10.9 yards per catch, with 22 touchdowns between. Dominic Blindert and Gavin Gassman have also been effective weapons.

SPECIAL TEAMS
Zach Bies has made better than three-fourths of his PAT attempts, and Andy Kappenman is posting a solid 38 yards per punt for McCook Central-Montrose.

INTANGIBLES
Tri-Valley has a strong dome history, including some players who were part of the Mustangs' three straight finals appearances. The Mustangs would also had plenty of success in other venues.

TV STAT LEADERS

RUSHING				
Cooper Hausmann	Att	Yds	Avg	Long
Kyle Erickson	80	726	9.1	6
Logan Koopman	103	530	5.1	10
MUSTANGS	524	3,316	6.3	49
Opponents	362	1,146	3.2	10

PASSING				
Brett Page	Com	Att	Yds	Int
MUSTANGS	28	50	595	2
Opponents	75	166	995	12

RECEIVING				
Kenton Welbig	No	Yds	Avg	Long
Andrew Buchmann	5	98	19.6	3
Dominic Burggraff	4	171	42.8	13
MUSTANGS	28	595	21.3	2
Opponents	75	955	12.7	6

MCM STAT LEADERS

RUSHING				
Andy Kappenman	Att	Yds	Avg	Long
Dominic Blindert	136	818	5.9	37
Gavin Gassman	115	506	4.7	32
FIGHTING COUGARS	491	3,018	6.1	62
Opponents	359	984	2.7	—

PASSING				
Gavin Gassman	Com	Att	Yds	Int
FIGHTING COUGARS	28	60	412	2
Opponents	75	166	955	7

RECEIVING				
Jordan Wolf	No	Yds	Avg	Long
Andy Kappenman	10	120	12.0	27
Sam O'Hara	3	99	33.0	38
FIGHTING COUGARS	28	412	14.7	38
Opponents	629	—	—	—

PLACE KICKING				
Zach Bies	EPm	EPa	FGm	FGa
	30	39	1	5

PUNTING				
Andy Kappenman	No	Avg	Long	In20
	28	38.0	62	4

DEFENSIVE LEADERS				
Dominic Blindert	Tack	TFL	Sack	INT
Andy Kappenman	84	11	—	—
Shayne Gottlob	66	8	5	1
Jordan Wolf	48	5	2	—
Nick Heumiller	37	2	9	—
Gavin Gassman	31	4	—	4
FIGHTING COUGARS	675	51	34	10
Opponents	500	38	21	5

PREDICTION

McCook Central-Montrose literally came out of nowhere this year to earn a title berth, the first in the school's history. The teams did not meet in the regular season, but last met in the first round of the 2010 playoffs, with TV winning 8-6.

Tri-Valley 20, MCM 14

Paterno

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Cornerback Stephon Morris said some players also were really in tears themselves.

"I can't believe it. I've never seen Coach Paterno like that in my life," Morris said. "He spent his whole life here, and he dedicated everything to Penn State," added safety Nic Sukay. "You could really feel that."

Paterno said he wanted to finish his 46th season with "dignity and determination." But the university's board of trustees forced him to leave sooner.

The board also ousted school president Graham Spanier.

In Washington, the U.S. Department of Education said Wednesday it has launched an investigation into whether Penn State failed to report incidents of sexual abuse on campus, as required by federal law.

Paterno said in a statement he was "absolutely devastated" by the case, in which his former assistant and onetime heir apparent, Jerry Sandusky, has been charged with molesting eight boys in 15 years, with some of the alleged abuse taking place at the Penn State football complex.

"This is a tragedy," Paterno said. "It is one of the greatest sorrows of my life. With the benefit of hindsight, I wish I had done more."

Paterno has come under harsh criticism — including from within the community known as Happy Valley — for not taking more action in 2002 after then-graduate assistant and current assistant coach Mike McQueary came to him and reported seeing Sandusky in the Penn State showers with a 10-year-old boy. Paterno notified the athletic director, Tim Curley, and a vice president, Gary Schultz.

Paterno is not a target of the criminal investigation, although Curley and Schultz have been charged with failing to report the incident to the authorities.

The retirement announcement came three days before Penn State hosts Nebraska in its final home game of the season, a day usually set aside to honor seniors on the team. Instead, this year will be Paterno's goodbye to the Beaver Stadium faithful.

Paterno appeared on the practice field later Wednesday in his signature khakis and navy windbreaker. Within five minutes of the start of practice, PSU officials told reporters to step back and then erected tall wooden boards in front of the fence.

Paterno's Record				
W	L	T	PCT	
1966 Penn State	5	5	0	.500
1967 Penn State	8	2	1	.773
1968 Penn State	11	0	0	1.000
1969 Penn State	11	0	0	1.000
1970 Penn State	11	3	0	.710
1971 Penn State	10	2	0	.833
1972 Penn State	12	0	0	1.000
1973 Penn State	10	2	0	.833
1974 Penn State	9	3	0	.750
1975 Penn State	7	5	0	.583
1976 Penn State	11	1	0	.917
1977 Penn State	11	1	0	.917
1978 Penn State	8	4	0	.667
1979 Penn State	10	2	0	.833
1981 Penn State	10	2	0	.833
1982 Penn State-x	11	1	0	.917
1983 Penn State	8	4	1	.654
1984 Penn State	6	5	0	.545
1985 Penn State	11	1	0	.917
1986 Penn State-x	12	0	0	1.000
1987 Penn State	8	4	0	.667
1988 Penn State	5	6	0	.455
1989 Penn State	8	3	1	.700
1990 Penn State	9	3	0	.750
1991 Penn State	11	2	0	.846
1992 Penn State	7	5	0	.583
1993 Penn State	10	2	0	.833
1994 Penn State	12	0	0	1.000